

Maine Conservation Connection

Maine Conservation Corps



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Summer Field Team Wraps Up

The MCC Field Team recently wrapped up another successful summer season. The annual MCC Summer Recognition event took place on Friday, August 12th with teams sharing their experiences and, of course, enjoying some cake! Attendees included John Graham, Deputy Chief of Staff for Congressman Michael Michaud; Will Harris, Director of the Bureau of Parks & Lands; Dan Burke, Assistant to Department of Conservation Commissioner Bill Beardsley; Lester Kenway, President of the Maine Appalachian Trail Club; and Mike Robinson, Stewart Field Assistant for the Nature Conservancy.

Thanks to all of our members, partners and volunteers for a great summer season!



Team Leaders Finish Summer Season

Alexander Bradley of Dresden, ME is a graduate of the MCC's 2011 Trail Training Academy (TTA). He also served with the MCC as a Team Member in 2004. His crew worked on two Appalachian Trail projects, Old Blue and West Baldpate.

"Summer of the A-Team...our epic stories begins with six strangers who immediately shared a love of fun. As quickly as a baby bird learns to fly, the A-team learned the art of stone. As the A-Team battled rainy days, black flies and the sweltering summer sun, they transformed into a powerful collective of tenacity and know-how. Old Blue can now be seen today 50 steps grander, with love in each step of elegant stone. Next the A-Team found themselves at the bottom of West Baldpate, enormous packs perched upon their



backs. Knowing what needed to be done, the A-Team sought all the force within them, for it would be 5 hours before they reached their destination. The A-Team arrived and all at once, a re-route was opened, headwalls repaired, hazardous bog-bridge metamorphosed into seductive stepping stones. Their leader Alex Bradley is now beardless. Jake Hansen will have a spectacular ring. Kevin Kirby will have ice coffee reading the New York Times. Katie Nemmer will be designing anything she wants. Eliza Perry will be studying in Copenhagen it would be hard to miss her wild hair! Sonia Bergmann will be dreaming about a sustainable future! And if you hear the sound of love in the Mountains of Western Maine, it might be from the A-Team. One banjo, one guitar, and a whole lot of soul."

This fall, Bradley will be starting at Washington County Community College studying Adventure Recreation and Tourism. He will be hard at work and play learning about Kayaking, Sailing, Ropes Course, Navigation and going on multiple four-day expeditions.

Elise Giasson of Auburn, ME is a graduate of the MCC's 2011 TTA. She also served with the MCC as a Team Member in 2009 and a Team Member and Assistant Team Leader in 2010. Her crew worked on projects in Perham, on Tunk Mountain and at Androscoggin Riverlands State Park.

“Although I’m excited for the fall (less bugs and hot weather!), I hate to think about the season coming to an end! It’s been such a pleasure to work with my fantastic crew and I can honestly say that I’ve had some of the best times in my MCC experience these past months. Jack, Chris, Anthony, Maggie and myself began this journey up North in Perham, where we got to know each other and had the first of very many van hang-out sessions. Our team then moved on to Tunk Mountain, growing to seven with the addition of Amelia and Nicole. We had some great adventures here including the infamous hike to the top of Tunk and a grueling yet team-building day of hauling lumber. We’ve been at



the Androscoggin River Lands since, where we’ve also had some pretty excellent experiences. We cut a mountain bike trail, put in bog bridging and stone steps, and did lots and lots of corridor and tread work! We also got to work with some great volunteers and have found many interesting ways to amuse ourselves at night (cartwheel race, anyone?) It’s been a blast and I will really miss everyone!”

Giasson will be serving with the MCC as a Team Leader through the fall season.

Aaron Mathias of New Riegel, OH previously served with the MCC as a Team Member in 2009, a Team Leader in 2010 and an Environmental Educator in 2011. His crew worked on projects in Baxter, Ferry Beach, and Vaughan Woods State Parks, Augusta, Georgetown, Dresden, and on Great Wass Island.

“The mini team has been to every part or area of the state of Maine this summer. The only area we didn’t get to go to was western Maine; maybe next time. Tom, Ken and I have had a great time together. We have worked really hard and thanks in large part to Ken’s cooking, we have eaten very well. A thanks goes out to Tom’s positive attitude for keeping our spirits high throughout the season. We have had a lot of good times this



summer and we look forward to what the future will bring to us all.”

Mathias will be continuing with the MCC through the fall as an Environmental Educator based out of the MCC’s Hallowell office working on outdoor recreation projects.

Lindsey May of Waukesha, WI is a graduate of the MCC’s 2011 TTA. She previously served with the MCC as a Team Member in 2006. Her crew headed downeast and worked on projects at Shackford Head and Cobscook Bay State Parks and in Ellsworth.



“We began our season at Shackford Head State Park, where we built a small stone staircase, several bog bridges, water bars, culverts, and spread lots of gravel. We commuted each day from our base camp at Cobscook Bay State Park, often stopping on our way home for ice cream at Polar Treat. After four weeks at Shackford Head, the crew began cutting trail at Cobscook Bay State Park. We completed a 14-foot cedar bridge, and almost two miles of new trail through mossy forests and ledges.

The trail connects to a fire tower and loops around toward the park entrance. The crew’s favorite part of the trail was the fallen cedar trees that are still living. They serve as a step onto bog bridging. Our next and final adventure took place in the Ellsworth City Forest. We cut a new loop trail to access Branch Lake, also Ellsworth City’s water supply, and a great place to go for a swim. We’ve had a great season together, and hope others enjoy the trails as much as we’ve enjoyed building them.”

May will be serving with the MCC as a Team Leader through the fall season.

Joseph O’Brien of Tulsa, OK is a graduate of the MCC’s 2011 TTA. His crew worked on projects at Nahmakanta and Pleasant Pond.

“What a year, what a year. We survived the bugs, the rain, the mud, the sun and the volunteers. I think we’ve grown up a lot, don’t you? Shhh, I’m talking here. In Nahmakanta we forged new ground, building a mile and a half of new trail and sprucing up some old as well. It was tough work, but the crew persevered like they would come to do in every situation. Over at Pleasant Pond on the AT we switched gears and built things out of rock and sweat and blood (quite literally). One week, a dozen volunteers poured into our little campground and turned our normally serene section of trail into a veritable

pit party. It was great. All in all, I'm proud of my crew, who worked through adversity, injury and bug-induced madness to create some genuinely excellent trails and structures. Proud of you!"



O'Brien will be traveling across the country with a friend and then starting work on September 1st with AmeriCorps' National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) as a Team Leader in Sacramento, California. After that, he will be hiking the John Muir Trail in California and then finishing his two-year nationwide adventure by spending some time exploring the deserts of Arizona, Nevada and New Mexico.

Matthew Spinner of Waterville, ME previously served with the MCC as a Team Leader in 2006-2009 and an Assistant Team Leader and Team Leader in 2010. His crew worked at Baxter and Bradbury Mountain State Parks, at Lake George Regional Park, and in East Waterboro and Blue Hill.



"This summer season has definitely been one of firsts, ups and downs (literally), and beautiful scenery. After spending eight weeks at Baxter, I can say with certainty that I probably

hiked more this season than in all my previous seasons combined. The summer weather was some of the best I've ever seen, while it was a little hot, it was mostly beautiful working weather, especially up north, and my team appreciated Mother Nature's cooperation. Another first racked up for me this past summer was the bugs, I couldn't believe the bugs, I have never seen people crawl into a fetal position and just cower until this summer, I think at least everyone on my team did this at least once this summer.

The ups and downs of this summer manifested themselves as we trudged through well over one-hundred and thirty miles of trails in Baxter, our team made our first "all-team"

summit on North Traveler in June, which was a lovely feat, though this was marred by black flies still swarming us at three-thousand feet coupled with fifteen mile-per-hour sustained winds. While the difficulties of working in Baxter were there, our team took them by the horns and made the best of the situation we were in. Even if the work and hiking were difficult, the location was probably one of the best I've ever been too, being able to look at the various mountains at different points in the day, I swear that Katahdin never had just one "look", it was ever changing, providing us with spectacular views in the morning as we drove or hiked to work. We couldn't have had a more picturesque spot to work, if anyone has the chance to get up to Baxter this fall season or in the future, and you haven't gone yet, I suggest going for some day hikes or even doing Katahdin, it's worth the trip."

Spinner will be serving with the MCC as a Team Leader through the fall season.

Johanna Stacy of Trenton, ME is a graduate of the MCC's 2011 TTA. Her crew worked on projects at Dodge Point Public Reserved Land, on Swan's Island and in Kennebunk.

"We've worked in some very beautiful places this summer. We just finished a new trail in Kennebunk that included two bridges and several areas of bog bridging. If you're ever in southern Maine, please check it out and let us know what you think! We are back at our riverside



campsite on the Damariscotta River to finish up work we began at the beginning of the season—bog bridging and stepping stones. And, of course, we get to see all the four-legged friends who frequent the trail too!"

Stacy will be moving to Massachusetts at the end of the season and possibly undertaking another AmeriCorps stint as well!

Timothy St. Thomas of Montvale, NJ is a graduate of the MCC's 2011 TTA. His crew worked at Androscoggin Riverlands State Park and on Saddleback Mountain.

"The season can be easily summed up with two words: Highs and Lows. We worked in the high mountain of Saddleback, but also in the low marshes of the Riverlands. We built tall bog bridges and stepping stones high above the mud, though only after weeks of



falling in the deepest muck known to man. We summited precipitous peaks and crept through cavernous caves. We met just as many hikers seeking the heights of Katahdin as those on the descent to Georgia. We also shared the joys of making new friends, as well as the sadness of seeing them depart. However, no matter how high or how low, we saw it together as a team - a team of 5 or 6 or 4 or 3.”

St. Thomas will briefly return home to New Jersey in order to spend time with family and friends. He will then

set off to work somewhere in New England for Nature's Classroom, teaching children math, science, and social studies in an outdoor, hands-on setting.

Neal Watercutter of Maitland, FL previously served with the MCC as an Assistant Team Leader and Team Leader in 2010. His crew worked on two northerly projects, Scraggly Lake and Deboullie Public Reserved Lands.

Watercutter will be serving with the MCC as a Team Leader through the fall season.



Environmental Educators Complete Service

Angela Ferrelli of Spring Lake, NJ served 1700 hours at the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Air Bureau.

“My term of service with the Maine DEP Air Bureau turned out to be more of a position to help Maine Energy Education Program (MEEP) fulfill their request of in school presentations. I learned so much about teaching in the classroom from this opportunity. I was fortunate enough to also be able to learn about outdoor education with Tamara Whitmore with Friends of the Cobbossee. I will miss the great people I worked with but



Ferrelli (center) after a work day organized by another MCC EE

I will not miss the cubicle I called home when not in the schools! My AmeriCorps position was able to cement in my mind that I was not built for cubicle life and for that realization early on I will forever be grateful. Through this I also was able to see a large percentage of the state and a total of 9 moose!”

This January, Ferrelli will be moving to Australia to pursue a master’s degree in environmental science.

Geoffrey Ng of Fishkill, NY served 1700 hours at the Maine DEP’s Land & Water program.

“I thoroughly enjoyed my term of service at the Maine DEP: Bureau of Land and Water Quality, and I think I will miss saying that long, professional line after my term ends;

after all, there’s nothing quite like serving with a government agency that is committed to protecting the environment. During my term of service, I taught nearly a thousand students about the importance of water and how to protect it from ourselves. Every day has been different and I will miss the variety. During my term, I went into numerous classrooms throughout the state of Maine, teaching at elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and even college! I mapped watershed boundaries and conducted watershed surveys. I sampled streams in Downeast Maine for bacteria and scraped algae

off of rocks in leech-ridden urban waterways in Bangor. I coordinated four watershed protection grants, which will hopefully stop storm water runoff from polluting local waters. I have made numerous friends while in my position, and I will sorely miss our adventures and our conversations about everything under the sun. There was nothing more gratifying than serving in a state, which, for the most part, understands its connection with the natural world.”



Ng teaching a group of students how to use a dissolved oxygen meter on China Lake

Ng plans on moving to Philadelphia, PA where his fiancée currently resides. She will be the breadwinner until he can find an honest job. Fortunately, he has a freelance writing gig with Silverback Marketing, which pays (not terribly well, but it's a start!). In the meantime, he'll also be dreaming of the outdoors and the next opportunity to cross country ski in a land far from the urban landscape. That, and working with his partner in crime to plan their wedding, which is officially going down on March 31, 2012.

Environmental Educator Celebration of Service

In late June, the MCC Environmental Educator (EE) program held its annual Celebration of Service. This year, a group of EE's worked alongside local high school students to help fellow EE Ben Godsoe with several projects in western Maine including work on the Fly Rod Crosby Trail in Madrid, carrying materials to be used on the nearby Appalachian Trail, and clearing an ATV trail in Madrid Twp.



A group of MCC EE's on Potato Hill during their Celebration of Service

Recruitment

The MCC is currently recruiting for 1700 hour Environmental Educator positions that will start in January. The positions run January 10, 2012-November 17, 2012. **The application deadline for positions starting in January is September 9, 2011.** For qualifications, benefits and position descriptions, please visit our website: http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/mcc/EEO_000.htm.

MCC Alumni

Ann (Morris) Bryant, Environmental Educator, 2009

Born among the sandstone formations of Southern Utah and raised poking her fingers into the tidepools of Northern California, Ann Morris Bryant grew up loving the natural world. Carrying that love with her to college, she graduated from Brigham Young University with a degree in biology. After saying a bittersweet goodbye to her job researching the harmful invasive, golden algae, at the University of Oklahoma Biological Station, in April she married the illustrious Air Force linguist, Mr. Bryant, from the Illinois Quad-Cities. She followed him to the island of O'ahu, where she currently spends her time learning about her new environs through the lens of her camera and will shortly be taking to the trails with the O'ahu Army Natural Resource Program.

What initially drew you to the MCC?

Who wouldn't want to do conservation work in Maine? 🇺🇸 After I graduated from college, I initially thought I wanted to teach, but after teaching for a couple of years, I realized what I really liked was teaching in less formal settings, preferably outdoors. And I missed doing research. My degree was in biology and I wanted to get back into that field, so I started looking at biology jobs and internships. In my search, I stumbled upon some listings for AmeriCorps service opportunities and so I began checking the AmeriCorps site for listings. When the listing for an Environmental Educator with the MCC in Maine came up, I knew it would be perfect for my combined education and biology background. And it was!

What was your favorite part about serving with the MCC?

Besides living in Maine? This may sound cliché, but it is true of every place I've worked or lived and it's no less true of the MCC; I miss most the people I was privileged to meet and work with. There are good people everywhere and the majority of them care about others and about their communities. When you get a group of those people together, good things can happen. I met a lot of good people in Maine.

I also have to say that my other favorite part about my MCC service was the amount of responsibility and trust I was given. I was put in charge of several projects from the outset, and though I received lots of training, help and advice from my awesome supervisor, Linda Alverson, she made it clear that they were *my* projects. That freedom, though initially intimidating, helped me learn so much more than I would have if I'd just spent the time doing things I was told to do. From talking to other MCC volunteers, it seems that most MCC service sites give the same level of responsibility and trust to their volunteers. I think it's indicative of both the quality of the program and the caliber of volunteers.

What was your favorite project/favorite place you served?

I served way up north in Presque Isle, land of forests and potato farms. I don't know that I can pick a favorite project, but I do have favorite moments from the projects I worked on, like when I was working on a watershed survey and all the landowners I contacted for permission to survey their land said yes and also wanted to help or at least know what we found. Another favorite moment was when we were teaching a group of farmers and foresters how to identify and protect vernal pools and we discovered fairy shrimp in one of the vernal pools we found. Everyone was really excited!



Bryant working at the University of Oklahoma Biological Station

How did your time with the MCC affect your career/life path?

I think it solidified my desire to work in natural resource conservation. My MCC service definitely helped me increase and develop skills that aided me in getting a job at the University of Oklahoma Biological Station that I really loved. I should also point out that I met the person who told me about the job during a service project. When I was serving in Maine, I realized how many great non-profit community conservation programs there are out there and how reliant they are on volunteers. I've made it a point to seek out and

volunteer with some wonderful programs in the areas I've lived in since leaving MCC. Getting the job at the Bio Station was one unexpected benefit that came from volunteering.

If you could give any advice to current or future MCC members, what would it be?

Get in there and get your hands dirty. Be involved. Your talents are needed in your communities, so be proactive in finding ways you can serve. MCC is a great way to start. :)

Brian Marienfeld (Wolf Taffy), Field Team, 2006 & 2007

My biggest three passions in my life are my community, the woods, and music. I graduated from Knox College in 2006 and soon after became part of MCC. Basically my twenties have been a time where I have with my vagabond nature and spent heaps of time out in the woods. Some highlight have been hiking the Appalachian trail and the Pacific Crest trail, living in the mountains with wolves, studying in Tasmania, and of course living in Maine. The past several years I have been a senior field instructor for a

wilderness therapy program which has been highly challenging and to be honest quite sassy as well. I love working with great youth who were searching for their emotional voice. Now my path is taking me to Washington State to go get my masters in teaching. Hopefully soon I will have my own classroom teaching k-8. I will miss having lots of time off and go exploring, but I feel it is my time to become just a tad bit more domestic!

What initially drew you to the MCC?

One of my closest friends, Sarah Gaffney, was from Maine and would constantly gush about its beauty and down to earth nature. I decided after I graduated it was time for me to see what all the fuss was about. I also fell in love with backpacking and the natural world when I lived in Tasmania, and I thought Maine would be a great place to continue my exploration while at the same time giving back to my community. Helping others have the chance to engage with their biophilia!

What was your favorite part about serving with the MCC?

I was part of MCC for two fall seasons. I loved the people I worked with and all I learned from them. My team leaders my first fall were very in to long distance hiking. They taught me tricks and encouraged me to go hike for months. I found that the individuals working for the MCC were passionate and would sing soul music with me as we would move rocks in mud. It was a simple, good life.



Mr. Marienfeld after completing his thru-hike of the AT!

What was your favorite project/favorite place you served?

One of my favorite assignments was building a rock staircase on the AT, the west Peak of Bald Pate Mountain. It was there that I fell in love with the trail and decided to thru hike it the next year. When I reached that part of the trail when I was thru hiking it was an amazing moment to make it back. I would tell people when I started down in Georgia that I was walking to work, it took under five months but was worth it to come back and be part of MCC again. I was not ready to live in a city!

How did your time with the MCC affect your career/life path?

It fueled my interest to hike the Appalachian Trail. It also helped me realize that I am more comfortable out in woods than in a big city. Since my time at MCC, most of my jobs have been centered around creating community and place out in the wilderness. It also reaffirmed my interest in helping our natural world through service and for me in the future through education.

If you could give any advice to current or future MCC members, what would it be?

Listen to soul music. It can be a great uplifting force when the weather is nasty and your body hurts. Also be patient with your career path, trust your gut and the world will open itself to you!

Volunteers of the Month

June

Devin Littlefield of Strong, ME was nominated by Environmental Educator Ben Godsoe for all his help preparing for volunteer days and going above and beyond the hour requirements of his volunteer internship. Littlefield was also selected as a Volunteer of the Month in 2010.

Eric Chetwynd of Swan's Island, ME was nominated by Team Leader Johanna Stacy and her crew. Chetwynd worked with the crew and also brought the crew hot chocolate and other goodies, took them on a tour of the island, and showed them around the Swan's Island lighthouse.

Will Parshley of Portland, ME was nominated by Team Leader Lindsey May and her crew. Parshley volunteered 23 hours over 3 days on the crew's Cobscook Bay State Park project. He jumped right in to the work (his timing was perfect, as they were down a team member that week) and helped them out immensely with the project. He also returned to volunteer with Lindsey's crew again later in the season, putting in 35 hours at their project in Ellsworth!

July

Steve Reed of Auburn, ME was nominated by Team Leader Elise Giasson and her crew for his help on the Androscoggin Riverlands State Park project—he also brought the crew doughnuts, which were much appreciated!

Marissa Markham of Waterboro, ME was nominated by Team Leader Joe O'Brien and his crew for all of her hard work during a 3-day volunteer trip at Pleasant Pond on the Appalachian Trail. The crew was very impressed with her work ethic and willingness to help with any aspect of the project!

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

Here are some highlights of volunteer opportunities coming up later this month. Additional information, position descriptions, equipment lists, & all MCC volunteer opportunities can be found here: <http://www.maine.gov/doc/parks/mcc/volunteer.html>

Field Team Projects

To volunteer: contact Sarah Gaffney at sarah.gaffney@maine.gov or (207) 624-6092

Cutler Coast Public Reserved Land (Cutler), August 26-30 (more dates in September)
Project details: Maintenance on nine miles of the Cutler Coast Trail.

Morong Trail (Lubec), August 26-29 (more dates in September)
Project details: New trail construction.

PCSWCD (Dover-Foxcroft), August 30-September 2
Project details: New trail construction on a Piscataquis County Soil & Water Conservation District project.

Grafton Notch State Park (Newry), August 30-September 1 (more dates in September)
Project details: Installation of stone steps on the Eyebrow Trail.

Environmental Educator Projects

Sandy River Land Trust/High Peaks Alliance (Madrid TWP), August 27th

Come on out to work on the Fly Rod Crosby Trail this summer! The next work day is going to be held on Saturday, August 27th. Rain date will be Sunday, August 28th. If you can't make it to one of these days but would still like to help out, contact Ben Godsoe at 207-578-0306. Work is ongoing all summer and we would love to have the help!

Volunteers should meet in the field below the Star Barn Bed & Breakfast in Madrid TWP at 9:30am. We will be clearing brush, building bog bridges (keeps hikers out of the mud in boggy areas) and clipping the trail corridor. Directions: Take Rt 4 to the center of Madrid Village, go across the Sandy River and approximately 5 miles on Reeds Mill Road to the Star Barn. Please park in the field below the Bed and Breakfast.

What to bring....1) Sturdy boots, work gloves and clothing (long pants) 2) Lunch and plenty of water 3) Loppers/Clippers if you have them (if not we will provide) 4) A smile! If you have any questions or would like more information please call Ben Godsoe at 207-578-0306.

Medomak Valley Land Trust (Waldoboro), September 3rd

Saturday, September 3rd the Medomak Valley Land Trust (MVLT) will be holding its fifth annual River Festival! The River Festival kicks off with the 5K Road Race that begins at 8am (registration begins at 7:30am). From 11am to 3pm the trust is going to be hosting the Market and Fair, and will also feature local food and live music. MVLT is in need of volunteers for the following: Greeters, Race Directors, Race Timers, Greeter at finish line, set-up of various parts of festival, various kid's activities (monitors and helpers), food ticket sales, vendor set up, griller, food service, food prep, River Festival Table, MVLT table, traffic director, boat guard, cross guard, sign set-up. If you are interested, Contact MCC Environmental Educator Caitlyn Lajoie at 832-557 or email her at volmvlt@midcoast.com